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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV AND OES - MARSHA GOLDBERG
STATE PASS TO AID/ANE - TIM RESCH
STATE PASS TO NOAA - JONATHAN JUSTI AND ANNE WALTON
BANGKOK FOR USAID

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KSCA](#) [EAID](#) [SENV](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: VIETNAM - SUPPORT TO INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT
BY EMBASSY SCIENCE FELLOW

1. Summary. Anne Walton, a marine coordinator with the National Marine Sanctuaries Program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) spent three weeks in Vietnam as an Embassy Science Fellow in December 2004. She focused on improving marine protected area management and coastal zone management. Walton helped the GVN analyze the STATE/AID/NOAA funded project on integrated coastal management in the Tonkin Gulf in Quang Ninh Province project. She compiled a strategic plan for integrated coastal management in the Northern Tonkin Archipelago, which will form the basis for the next phases of the project. The strategy will be presented at the wrap-up session for Phase I of the project to be held in Ha Long March 14-16 (to be reported septel). The strategic plan provides a basis for future proposals for public and private donor support in marine protected area management and coastal management. End Summary.

2. Anne Walton, a marine coordinator with the National Marine Sanctuaries Program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) spent three weeks in Vietnam as an Embassy Science Fellow in December 2004. She met with the EST officer and US-AEP Representative to describe her activities in Vietnam. Her focus was on improving marine protected area management and coastal zone management primarily through work on a two-year roughly USD 450,000 project to build capacity for integrated coastal management in the Tonkin Gulf. The Department of State's East Asia Pacific Environment Initiative (EAP-EI), USAID, and NOAA are providing funding for this project. NOAA and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) are carrying out the project in partnership with Vietnam's Ministry of Fisheries (MOFI), the Hai Phong Institute of Oceanography (HIO) and the Ha Long Bay Management Authority (HLBMA). The first phase of this three-phase project began in 2002 and will end in March 2005. There is no funding for the second phase of the project.

3. Walton helped conduct analysis and prepare final reports for the first phase of the project. She also assisted IUCN in coordinating a commune beach cleanup at Hon Mun Marine Protected Area in Nha Trang City, Khanh Hoa Province. Compiling a strategic plan covering the project's second and third phases as well as to extend the project area into other areas of Vietnam as well as into southern China was her main task. The plan addresses five resource management issues: fishing activities, water quality, habitat loss, tourism development, capacity building. The strategy will be presented at the closing session of Phase I in Ha Long City March 14-16 (to be reported septel) and will provide a basis for future proposals for public and private donor support.

4. Walton noted that integrated coastal management (ICM) was appropriate for the long-term management and sustainable development of the region's various resources. ICM attempts to guide future development and to correct past environmental mistakes, she observed. ICM allocates natural resources effectively and limits ill-advised development, but requires networking among all relevant government activities, including national economic development planning, communities and NGOs.

5. The first phase of the project focused on developing the planning and managerial capacity for ICM among national- and provincial-level officials, Walton said. This phase mainly involved raising awareness of ICM for guiding decision-making on coastal development, she noted. At the same time, the project promoted ICM to enhance the strategic planning process and analysis at the local and national level. The project activities included training, technical assistance, socioeconomic assessments, habitat surveys, community education and outreach. Walton noted that project activities illustrated the benefits of ICM to senior GVN officials. Key officials involved included Vice Minister of Fisheries Dr. Nguyen Viet Thang, Vice Minister of Science and Technology Dr. Bui Manh Hai and Vice Chairman of Quang Ninh Province People's Committee- Nguyen Duy Hung. Other GVN officials, NGOS and corporate partners also attended.

16. According to Walton, the project's second phase will seek to nurture the public-private partnerships initiated in the first phase. These partnerships seek to address the policy, managerial, community, economic and technical requirements for the future growth and development in the region. Walton said that the plan also forms the basis for a community-based ICM plan for the area it covers. She also noted that the plan identifies five priority resource management issues and the appropriate activities in the first and second phases to address those issues. The goal of the project is to create a final plan to implement a system of marine protected areas. Composed of stakeholders from communities, local governments and NGOs, the NTA Protected Area Coordination Council will be the primary vehicle to achieve these objectives.

17. Walton went on to explain that the NTA protected Area Coordination Council will meet at least three times during Phase II to coordinate conservation and management of the NTA. At the end of Phase II, the council will draft a plan to address region-wide goals for marine and coastal resource conservation, she added. Council members will have access to historical and near real time geographically referenced data sets and an analytical tool, developed in Phase I, for making critical coastal resource management decisions for the Halong Bay area, Walton noted. Another critical element of Phase II will be to train and certify Vietnamese officials to manage marine protected areas effectively.

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